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MARX'THEORY OF VALUE (3)

ECONOFICTION MARX, MARXISM, MONEY, VALUE THEORY, VALUE-FORM

1. general value form

In order to obtain the general value form from the unfolded value form, only the simple operation of reversal is required, which implies that we are dealing virtually with a simultaneous second and third value form. Now commodity A no longer expresses its value (as in the unfolded form of value) in all possible commodities, but conversely all commodities express their value in a commodity X different from them. Marx writes: "The goods now represent their values 1. simply because in a single good and 2. uniformly because in the same good". (MEW 23: 79) This exclusion of a single good within a multiplicity of goods means that any goods such as noodles, skirts, books, computers or shirts express their value in a single good which is in the general equivalent form. Ruben writes: "By taking this circumstance into account, we reverse the position of the objects in the expression of value so that a now becomes the sole means of reflection, while the objects b, c, d, ... become the many objects whose values are to be reflected by a. We thus gain 'b/ = a ∧ c/ = a ∧ d/ = a ∧ ... e' as the linguistic expression of the universal or general value form. Instead of the totality of the valuation means, a certain universe of valued objects takes place, which are all related to exactly one valuation means. This universe forms an example for the meaning of the quantitative concept of mathematics. It is thus the second evolutionary step in the development of the value form that provides the protomathematic prerequisite for the realization of descriptive thinking." (Ruben 2008: 95) This universe would be to be understood in the broader sense with Günther Anders as nevertheless insufficient part of a cohesive, windowless, seamless and gapless system. (Anders 1980: 195) It can be read as a concatenation of conjunctions that can, but do not have to, be transformed into various disjunctions of actualization (products realize themselves as goods in sale, which can take place, but need not take place). (Cf. Strauß 2013: 162)

When a commodity occupies the general equivalent position, it is interchangeable with all other commodities, but this position can virtually occupy all commodities. And we immediately come across the fourth value form, in which each commodity can take the form of the general equivalent, so that when this position is realized, all commodities exclude all of them from the general equivalent form. (Cf. the overview in Strauß 2013: 232f.) In order to demonstrate the lack of stability of the economic constitution of form, Marx uses in the first edition of capital the representation of a fourth form of value: "The general form of equivalence always belongs to only one pair in contrast to all other pairs; but it belongs to each pair in contrast to all others. But if each pair compares its own natural form with all other pairs as general equivalence form, then all pairs exclude all from the general equivalence form and therefore themselves from the socially valid representation of their values". (MEGA II/5: 43) The fourth value form thus remains conceptually just as under-defined (it "solves" no problem) as the simple, the unfolded and the general value form, because with it it is finally possible that within this specific syntax of the chains of goods each commodity in principle occupies the place of the general equivalent, with which all goods exclude all from the general equivalent form.

It now becomes apparent that the representation of a (logical) genesis of the forms of value, which is ultimately to lead to the form of money, whereby in the Marxist discussion the form of money is often equated misleadingly with the general form of equivalence, obviously does not achieve this goal. And thus at this point one also reaches the limit of the logical-conceptual representation, for it can neither show the conditions of stability or the regulating "law" (cf. Strauß 2013: 164) for an economy nor tame or shut down the postponement of the explicit, which must simply escape the identifying thinking. The conclusion itself is postponed at this point, it is questioned and again refers to the questionableness of its own premises and thus already gives itself a virtual evidence. The procedure of self-similar reflexivity, which guides the analysis of the value form, thus, due to the indeterminacy or contradictoriness of the fourth value form, which Marx then does not delete from the second issue of capital without consequences for the concept of money, by no means leads to the form of money or to a stringent concept of money. Thus, the striking argument in the context of the fourth value form is that, from the perspective of a fully developed capital, the representation of the formation of the form of money from pre-monetary forms of value

have to fail. It turns out that there are potentially infinitely many forms of the general equivalent, which, however, must not at all lead to the reverse conclusion of treating the existence of the general value form exclusively as a question of historical

contingencies, although there are actually historical tendencies that shape something like possible historical situations. Under the impulse of very specific tendencies, which at the same time require something beyond them, it is now necessary to show how these tendencies are integrated into a capitalist structure.

In capital, in the first three chapters, Marx deals with the problem of money only as a conceptual auxiliary construction that finally allows him to develop the concept of the capitalist mode of production. Finally, money, as the most general form of capital, moves only in its own self-realization process, in which it is generated as a monetary credit to which all other forms of money, such as state-certified paper money, are subordinated. Thus, money circulation is regarded as a dependent variable of capital accumulation based on the typical money of capital, namely credit money. But capital needs economic math for this. And the conclusion in this respect should again be that there is a symbolic “force” that is responsible for the fact that in capitalism money occupies, among other things, the position of a “homogeneous numeraire”.

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